

From: FrankieCTB2 Sent: 10/9/2006 8:07 PM

Elise let out a whistle at the sight beneath her as she brought one in to land. As soon as the aircraft came to a rest, she threw down the ladder and hit the ground running. Spying Scott, she immediately ran over to him.

"Where the hell have you been, Frankie?!" Scott practically jumped down her throat.

"Breaking speed records to get here! Where d'ya think I was? Out sightseeing?" Her voice dripped of sarcasm; her feathers were now ruffled.

Scott realized he'd snapped and he probably shouldn't have. He knew Elise would have flown hell bent for leather to get here. "Sorry," he mumbled.

Elise sighed. "Okay," then added in a warning tone, "Just don't do it again. Now, what's the plan?" Scott filled her in as they watched Brandon and Gordon work.

"Who are all these guys?" Elise asked, noticing the gathering of various people nearby.

"Local EMS mostly, and the media," Scott said the last part with disgust.

"Typical. Ambulance chasers, just what we need." She paused, and then added, "Yes, I activated the camera fogger!"

Scott smiled slightly at her uncanny ability to read his mind sometimes.

They turned their attention back to the rescue. It seemed that there were twenty different things going on all at once.

Outwardly Scott was the role model of a field commander but inside, Elise knew his stomach must have been churning. Just as he finished talking to Virgil, Elise asked, "I bet base is worried sick about this."

Scott was hesitant in replying, which prompted her to ask, "They do know, don't they?"

Scott looked at her, glanced away and then looked back at her. "No, not yet."

Elise was stunned, but before she had a chance to say anything, John called Scott. It took but a few seconds for Scott to become irritated with his brother. "No, I haven't yet, and yes, I do know!" Elise glanced sideways at Scott through her visor as he let out a frustrated sigh. "I'm on it, okay!? Maverick out." He looked at Elise but no words were needed. He reached up to adjust his earpiece again, dreading what he was about to say, and called base. "International Rescue base from Maverick."

The reply was instant. "Go ahead Maverick."

Jeff had been waiting to hear the official stand down from Scott. John had kept him informed of the weather, except the rogue tornado, which had happened so quickly and during the space rescue as well. As Jeff paid closer attention to his son's face on the vid-screen, he noticed how tense and worried Scott looked and he didn't like it. The hair on the back of his neck stood up. Something was wrong and Scott was about to tell him it wasn't good.

Scott quickly decided to get to the point. There was no use beating around the bush. "We have a major problem here, Sir; we were hit unexpectedly by a rogue tornado after the initial rescue. Thunderbird's One and Two and the pod vehicles are secure, no damage. Thunderbird Seven took a direct hit from the tornado." Scott swallowed as the news sunk in.

"WHAT!" Ohmigod, Dianne! Jeff's heart dropped into his stomach. "How bad is it?" Jeff managed to ask.

"Pretty bad, I'm afraid. Tynan, Angel and Doc are all injured." Jeff let out a breath; thankful to hear they were all alive. "We're cutting into the cockpit in right now to get them out. It looks like Doc's injuries are the worse."

Jeff closed his eyes, praying that when he opened them he'd be at his wife's side, holding her, helping her, anything but what he was doing right now. When he opened them, he knew he hadn't been praying hard enough. "Maverick, who is cutting them out of the cockpit?"

"Cousteau and Big Mac and we have some local EMS personnel on hand to help if needed."

"I'm going to call Cousteau to find out how serious Doc's injuries are and in the meantime I want you to make sure Thunderbird One is ready for transporting A.S.A.P."

"F-A-B." Scott signed off as his father called Gordon. He looked at Elise who'd been standing there the entire time. "Think you can get One ready for patient transport in record time?"

She smiled softly and replied, "Consider it done, Commander." Giving a mock salute, she ran back to Thunderbird One.